

HARVARD

RRC NEWSLETTER

RUSSIAN RESEARCH
CENTER

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INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION FIGURES

<u>Product</u>	<u>May 1986</u>	<u>Jan- May 1986</u>	<u>J-May '86 as % of J-May '85</u>
Elect. (b.kw.hrs)	122	688	104%
Petroleum (inc. gas cond.) (mil. metric tons)	52.2	251	102%
Nat. Gas (b.cu.mtr)	56.8	285	107%
Coal (mil. metric tons)	59.3	317	104%
Steel (mil. met. tons)	13.7	67.2	107%
Fertilizer (mil.tons)	3.0	14.7	110%
Metal-cut- ting tools (mil. rubles)	226	1179	112%
Robots (in 1000s)	1.2	5.9	125%
Computer Technology (bil. rubles)	149	775	106%
Tractors (mil. hp)	4.3	23.1	105%
Paper (mil. metric tons)	2.9	14.4	107%
Cement (mil. metric tons)	11.6	55.6	106%

<u>Product</u>	<u>May 1986</u>	<u>Jan- May 1986</u>	<u>J-May '86 as % of J-May '85</u>
Meat (mil. metric tons)	0.7	4.3	108%
Margarine (1000 tons)	123	660	104%
Watches (mils)	5.5	28.9	104%
Radios (mils)	0.7	3.7	106%
TV sets (mils)	0.8	3.9	103%
Automobiles (1000s)	104	550	99.6%

NO APPARENT CHERNOBYL IMPACT

The big question about the May 1986 production figures was whether or not Chernobyl would have any impact on electrical production. According to the official figures it did not. While that may be hard to believe in light of the fact that Chernobyl was supposed to account for 1 1/2% of all electrical production in the country, the official report is that production increased 4% for Jan-May 1986 over Jan-May 1985. Similarly, on a May 1986 to May 1985 basis, production is also up 4%. In other words, the increase in electrical output in May of 4% was the same as the increase in April of 4%. There was a slight dip in April when compared to March, but hardly enough to be significant.

Equally interesting is the fact that petroleum production continues

to increase. By now, it is not just a blip in the statistical data. Production for the entire five month period in 1986 is up 1.6%, which is officially listed as 2%. However, on a May for May basis, production is up 3%. That is a very sharp turnaround from the condition a year ago, when production for May 1985 was down 4% from what it was in May 1984. May 1986 production is not quite back to where it was in May 1984 (it is still 1% below what it was), but the trend is upward and the likelihood now seems even greater that production in all of 1986 will be above 600 million tons. There is still the general perception that production is falling, a consequence of the writings of other specialists that appeared a year or so ago, particularly an article in the journal Soviet Economy. The change seems to be a result primarily of the changes in management which Gorbachev introduced and a very intensive effort at new drilling and more careful work. The crackdown on alcohol and poor discipline is clearly paying off in the oil fields.

While petroleum production has been growing, the Soviets still say it is below plan. They indicate that it is off by 2.9 million tons, which would mean that production for the five months should be growing at 2.4%, rather than 1.6%.

Production in some of the other industrial sectors is not quite as impressive. For example, whereas gas production was growing at 10% a year ago, now it is growing at 7%, and on a May for May basis, by 6%. Steel production on a month by month basis is also growing at 3%, but considering that it was dropping a few years ago, it is still an impressive growth.

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ARDEN HOUSE CONFERENCE NOTICE

Please note on your calendars that the dates for the 1987 Arden House Conference have been changed to March 20-22, 1987.

HEAD OF LIVESTOCK IN COLLECTIVE AND STATE FARMS (in millions)

	Jun 1 1985	Jun 1 1986	Jun 86 as % of Jun 85
Cattle	98.9	99.6	100.7%
Cows	29.7	29.4	99%
Hogs	57.8	59.5	102.9%
Sheep & Goats	143.5	146.8	102.3%
Chickens	796	799.2	100.4%

The livestock herds continue to improve. The Soviets are continuing to have difficulty building up their cow herd, and the number of chickens seems to have dropped slightly from what it was last month, but overall the Soviets should be satisfied with the increase.

JOHN M. OLIN CRITICAL ISSUES SEMINAR SERIES

The last of the John M. Olin Foundation's Critical Issues Seminar series devoted to Soviet nationality issues took place on June 12th. Walker Connor of Trinity College presented a lecture entitled "The Unwithering National Question."

Professor Connor prefaced his presentation with the disclaimer that he was not a Soviet specialist; his work on the nationalities of the Soviet Union began about eight years, previous to that time he concentrated on a comparative study of nationality and national movements from a global perspective. When he began his work on Soviet nationalities he was surprised by the general lack of literature on the subject, since Marxist-Leninist states claim to be

capable of harnessing nationalism in their countries:—

Professor Connor's work on Soviet nationalities was essentially completed by 1984, but he sees little change in policy since Gorbachev's ascent to power. As always, the Soviet authorities insist that they are guided by Lenin's thought in the national question. It is therefore necessary to examine carefully the basic premises of Lenin's work on the national question. His essential ideas can be reduced to three presumptions: 1) before taking power, the Party must promise autonomy and rights to the national groups, such as the right to secession; 2) the Party's goal is to ultimately homogenize society through the dialectical use of national autonomy; 3) the Party must be highly centralized. The first premise, the Party's promise of national autonomy, was key to the Party's gaining and consolidating of power in the Soviet Union. Yet, nationalism is to be destroyed in the post-revolutionary state, strangely enough through such an encouragement of national rights and autonomy. In 1930, Stalin maintained that those who did not understand how such a seemingly self-contradictory policy could work did not grasp the dialectical character of historical processes. Nationalism is seen as the outgrowth of previous oppression and discrimination. Therefore, national autonomy must be encouraged so that Sovietization does not seem to be merely the continuation of national oppression. A natural coming together of the nations would follow. This belief that Sovietization would not be resisted if dressed in local attire reflects the clear distinction Lenin (and later Stalin) made between form and content. Thus, a national form was to be used to convey Party content.

The cornerstone of Lenin's policy was a period of rigorous national equality; equality is seen by the Soviets as having three as-

pects: economic, cultural and political. The Soviet leaders continually stress the economic equality of national regions within the USSR, and boast of the enormous economic growth of previously underdeveloped areas. Yet in 1978 it was proclaimed that economic equality had been achieved and that henceforth policy would be dictated by the demands of economic efficiency. It can easily be maintained, however, that strategic and economic concerns have always been prominent in the formulation of policy.

The most important element in the tripartite formulation of national equality has always been cultural. In the immediate post-revolutionary period, non-Russian language schools flourished. This policy was restricted in the 1930s, and the level of schooling in any language came to reflect that language group's administrative status. Even those groups with union republic status have been pressured to assimilate, particularly the Baltic nationalities, Armenia and Georgia. The differences in wording in the 1936 and 1977 constitutions clearly reflect the weakening of this cultural policy. The authorities believe that linguistic assimilation, the establishment of Russian as the state's lingua franca, will lead to cultural assimilation.

The political aspect of national equality is said to exist through the federal structure. The republics' independence is more a matter of form than of substance. The authorities have made certain that these administrative units do not become centers for national agitation by two means - cadre policy and population redistribution. Leninist national policy mandates that the central policy organs should reflect the multinational character of the state. Visible national cadres are necessary to convince groups that they are not being discriminated against. Yet, despite shifts in

the make up of cadres the Soviet leadership has always been adamantly opposed to the nationalization of cadres. Thus, for example the 1961 Party-program explicitly called for the exchange of cadres, as does the latest Party program. National cadres are assigned to positions of high visibility, such as first secretary, while Russian continue to dominate in the position of second secretary. The security organs continue to be disproportionately Russian.

Longstanding Soviet policy has been that regional autonomy should be granted to compact national groups, yet changes in population distribution have often deprived these administrative divisions of their national content. In nine of the 27 union and autonomous republics, the titular group no longer makes up a majority of the republic. Since 1917, the influx of Russians into non-Russian homelands has been dramatic. Since 1979 the Russians have accounted for at least seven percent of any union republic's population, except for Armenia. Titular groups in union republics today account for less than two-thirds of their republics' populations. The national concentrate within the republics, however, is now increasing as many groups refuse to leave their national homelands or return to them. The authorities continue to concoct new persuasions and requirements to impel the national groups to move, often unsuccessfully.

In summary, there is little evidence of the dialectical process as anticipated by Lenin as coming into effect. At the same time, however, it may be said that Lenin's policy has never really been given a fair trial. The cornerstone of this policy, as stated above, was the establishment of national equality which was never seriously implemented by the Soviet authorities. Even if such an equality was achieved, it is difficult to believe that national distinctions and self-identity would dis-

appear within the framework of national autonomy. It is a fundamentally false presumption that one can have nations without having nationalism.

Susan G. Zayer

CORPORATE SPONSOR SEMINARS 1986-87

We are beginning to organize our Corporate Sponsor Seminars for this coming year. The first one will be held on Monday, September 29, 1986 at the Harvard Faculty Club. The focus will be on Chernobyl and what happened. Letters have been sent to prospective speakers and we should have a preliminary program ready for our August newsletter. We will take a look at the engineering and scientific side of what happened, as well as the political and economic side. There will also be presentations about the impact of the Chernobyl explosion on world energy and on the Soviet petroleum, coal and gas industries. We also hope to make a comparison between what happened at Chernobyl and the events at Three Mile Island. We have included a registration form for those who want to sign up early.

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Gorbachev Openness Goes Up in Smoke

By MARSHALL L. GOLDMAN

After Mikhail S. Gorbachev addressed his countrymen on May 14 about the nuclear-plant disaster at Chernobyl, several Western observers commented that while he should be criticized for having taken 18 days to respond, his speech nonetheless seemed to be yet another example of the Soviet leader's new openness.

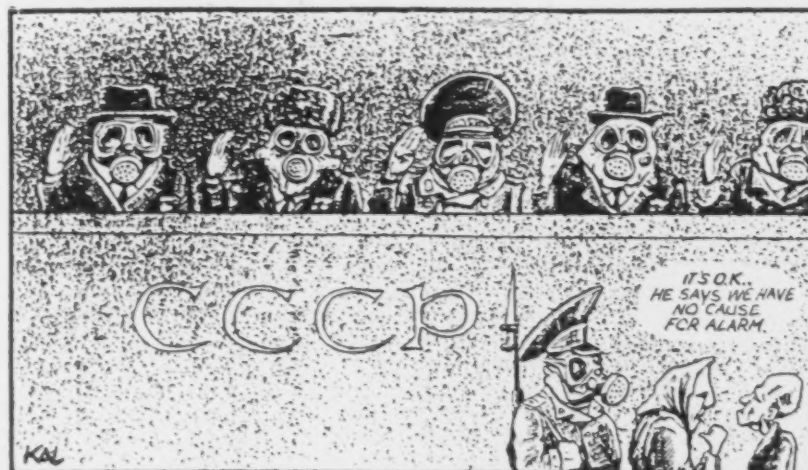
Unfortunately, a closer look at Gorbachev's behavior after the explosion indicates that during the crisis he reverted to the old secretive ways of his predecessors. Despite the fact that he was informed almost immediately about the possible dangers, he and his colleagues unconsciously delayed the relocation of local residents whose health had been put at risk.

Then, in an attempt to rationalize what had happened, he reverted to half-truths and sought to explain away his responsibility by placing the blame for inaction on local officials. This hardly fits Gorbachev's New Year's Day call for more candor from Soviet officials.

To be fair, some of what Gorbachev had to say in his Chernobyl speech did meet the issue head on. For example, he described the hydrogen explosion and release of radioactive material and admitted that "the seriousness of the situation was obvious." But thereafter—in a defense of himself, his party and his country—Gorbachev indulged in a series of distortions, if not outright lies. For this he cannot be forgiven.

Gorbachev stressed that "as soon as we received reliable initial information, it was made available to the Soviet people and sent through diplomatic channels to the governments of foreign countries."

The facts are very different. According to Soviet scientists, the explosion occurred at 1:23 a.m. on Saturday, April 26. Shortly thereafter, the Council of Ministers office in Moscow was notified. Reflecting how serious they thought the situation was, the officials in Moscow immediately formed a government commission. With pride, Soviet scientists reported that even though "more than one-half of its members were in different parts of the Soviet Union, thousands of kilometers apart, we arrived, then got to work on the same day." Equally impressive, Gen. Gennady V. Berdov, the deputy minister of internal affairs in the Ukraine, reached the site from Kiev a mere 90 minutes after the Chernobyl explosion. They all obviously knew that they had a serious problem on their hands.



KAL. Today, London

What Gorbachev did not explain, or even acknowledge, was why no one made any effort to immediately evacuate the 40,000 residents of Pripyat, less than six miles downwind of the plant. Not until 36 hours after the explosion, at 2 p.m. Sunday, were they bused out.

The Soviets waited even longer to evacuate others farther out. It was only on Saturday, May 3—a full week after the explosion—that a Moscow delegation consisting of Nikolai I. Ryzhkov, the prime minister, and Yegor K. Ligachev, the second-ranking member of the Politburo, ordered the removal of the 15,000 residents of Chernobyl, 10 miles away, and extended the danger zone from six to 18 miles. By June 5 the number evacuated had risen to more than 100,000.

Those outside the Soviet Union were not treated with any more candor. Gorbachev's assertions to the contrary, they were not provided with "full information." Indeed, beginning on Monday morning, April 28, Swedish officials telephoned three Soviet agencies—the Soviet Committee for the Utilization of Atomic Energy, the Ministry of Electric Power and the State Committee for Safety in the Atomic Power Industry—asking for information about the high radioactivity readings occurring all over Scandinavia. Despite international agreements requiring the exchange of information about accidents, all three agencies insisted that there was none to give out. It was 9 p.m. that Monday when the Soviet press issued the first public statement that

anything had gone wrong—almost three full days later.

Gorbachev also distorted the truth when he asserted, "For the first time ever, we encountered such a sinister force as nuclear energy that has escaped control." It was the first time that radioactivity from a Soviet incident had been detected in the West, but the Soviets had a very serious explosion in 1957 at Kyshteyn in the Ural Mountains. Less serious incidents occurred in 1974 at Shevchenko and in 1981 at Rovno.

Gorbachev must also be held to account for his inaccessibility during the crisis. He made a public statement on May Day, and delivered a public speech from the Kremlin on May 6 in which he defended Libya. But it took more than two weeks before he said anything about Chernobyl.

Like those before him, Gorbachev sought to rally his people by blaming outsiders for excessive exaggeration and undue criticism of Soviet ineptitude. His predecessors were also unresponsive to crisis. In a state of panic, it took Josef Stalin 11 days after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union before he finally addressed his people. While the circumstances surrounding Chernobyl were quite different, Gorbachev's initial leadership and candor were in many ways just as flawed.

Marshall L. Goldman is the Class of 1919 Professor of Economics at Wellesley College and associate director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University.

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CHERNOBYL: WHAT HAPPENED AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SOVIET
AND WORLD ECONOMY

September 29, 1986

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